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782 Brockway[1] says: "At planting time the Tanala [Menabe] kill oxen. . . . What is killed, with a considerable quantity of *toaka* [rum] is laid upon altars in the fields as an offering to their ancestors. . . . The altar stones on which the offerings are made are a curiosity and I have seen them nowhere else in Madagascar." The "altar stones," which he describes, are evidently memorial stones of the usual Tanala form and he probably mistook a special for a general practice. Sacrifices are necessary when crops are planted in a *zintana* (place belonging to the ancestral spirits, see p. 168) but not for ordinary planting.

241 After the *tany* has been burned, little or no attempt is made to prepare the field further. At most, piles of ashes left by large trees will be leveled and some of the ash carried and spread on bare spots.

[412] The planting is done with a dibble of hard wood 4 to 5 feet long and about 1½ inches in diameter (Fig. 1, a). One informant said that the point must always be made from the root end of the sapling, as otherwise the plants would not grow strong and erect. Holes are punched in the soil to a depth of 3 or 4 inches, the seed dropped in and covered with the foot. There is no attempt to plant in regular rows. Seeds of all sorts are carried mixed together in a deep, narrow basket which is slung from the waist in front or on the right side (Fig. 1, b). Among the Menabe, at least, seeds of several sorts are often planted in the same hole. The planting is usually done by men, but the women often assist.

412 241 Aside from the dibble just described, the only Tanala agricultural implement is the spade. This has an iron blade 1 foot to 18 inches long and 4 or 5 inches wide. The blade is flat or slightly concave and the cutting edge straight. At the top there is a rounded shoulder and a deep socket for the insertion of a handle (Fig. 1, k). The handle is straight and about 5 feet long and is made from hard, heavy wood. The shoulder of the spade is too narrow to be used as a step in forcing it into the ground. It is swung with both hands, driven into the ground, and a piece of earth levered out.

Tanala spades are identical with those of the neighboring plateau tribes and nearly all of them are imported from that region. Among the groups which live exclusively by *tany* agriculture they are little used and I found that many families did not own one. Their main use is in the construction of terraces and in the preparation of the earth before planting wet rice and I suspect that many of the gentes did not use them in ancient times. Hoes are unknown in Madagascar.

[1] Brockway, T. A., A Visit to Ambohimanga in the Tanala Country, Antananarivo Annual, 2nd Ed., No. 2, p. 181.

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There is no cultivation of standing crops. Weeding is done by hand, usually by the women and children. The fields are sometimes fenced with posts and saplings bound crosswise with withes, somewhat like our own post and rail fences, but this seems to be rare. It is only resorted to in places where the wild pigs are numerous.

When the grain begins to ripen, members of the family are on guard day and night to drive away birds and wild pigs, whose nocturnal raids often cause serious damage. Cords with bits of cloth or leaves attached are sometimes suspended over the fields, but there seem to be no elaborate scarecrows comparable to those of Malaysia. Bamboo bull-roarers are often used to frighten away the birds, but this task is usually delegated to small boys armed with slings. They are very expert with these weapons and I have seen a boy bring down a bird no larger than a sparrow at twenty yards. At night the men keep guard with spears, to drive off pigs. Also, traps are set in their runs and at gaps in the fence.

The Menabe, like the Ikongo, sacrifice before beginning the harvest, but their method is slightly different. A post, called *fatotra*, is set up in the *tavy* of each family. It is about 4 feet high and 2 or 3 inches in diameter (Fig. 23, k). The top is split in the form of a cross and little wedges inserted with their ends projecting almost horizontally, forming a small stand or platform about 6 inches across. The husband, not the wife, gathers the green rice and makes the *lango*. He places a little of it, on a piece of the leaf of the Traveler's Palm, on the *fatotra* and says: "Oh *Fahasivy* [ancestors], you have given us a good harvest. We give you this meal as your share." The neighboring Betsimisaraka make their harvest sacrifice in the same way, but mix rice chaff with the *lango*.

After the sacrifice has been made, the harvest commences. The rice is headed with small iron knives identical with those used in weaving, as razors, etc. (Fig. 1, f). The stalks are cut between the knife blade and the thumb, two or three at a time, and the heads dropped into a basket held in the left hand. The heads are often dried on mats in the sun before they are stored. No use is made of the straw, which is left to rot in the fields.

The granaries, *homby*, are small houses, shaped like miniature dwellings. The walls and floor are of split and interwoven bamboo and the roof heavily thatched with the leaves of the Traveler's Palm. They are always raised on smooth posts, to keep out the rats, but the height varies greatly. The average is about 6 feet, but some are as low as 4 feet, and others as high as 12 feet. There is a small door

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177 492 formerly had a few riding oxen. Both of these are due to European contact. The Tsimahety, at the northern end of the plateau, use oxen as pack animals and apparently have done so since pre-European times. The loads are placed in cloth bags, which are slung across the animal behind the hump, one hanging on each side.

233 556 It is safe to say that if all the cattle belonging to the Tanala Menabe were destroyed over night, no member of the tribe would miss a meal or suffer any other serious hardship. Their loss would be somewhat more serious to the Ikongo, but they would still be able to get along quite well without them. In spite of this lack of practical value, cattle are everywhere of great social importance. [454] With the possible exception of slaves, which no longer exist, they represent the only form of interest-bearing investment possible under native conditions. Every man tries to accumulate as many as possible and his standing in the community is largely determined by [777] the size of his herd. Charms to increase the fertility of cattle are common and cattle are only sold or killed in case of absolute necessity. They are regarded almost as members of the family and the idiosyncrasies of each animal are well known. One informant told me that they are the only animals which possess souls. They are not regarded [782] as sacred, but the killing of an ox, either as a sacrifice or for meat, is an integral part of practically all important ceremonies.

685 556 Although the Tanala consider ordinary theft as one of the most serious of all offenses, cattle stealing is regarded as honorable so long as the members of one's own village are not molested. In fact, it is considered a proper occupation for a young man of spirit and offers an easy road to wealth and advancement. The native attitude is comparable to that of our own Plains Indians toward horse [721] stealing. Cattle formed the most important part of the spoil in warfare and a successful theft was in the nature of a war exploit. European efforts to suppress it have rather heightened the thief's prestige by increasing his hazards.

541 764 Bull baiting and watching fighting bulls were both important sports in pre-European times. They still persist, but are becoming rare. I could get no information on bull baiting among the Ikongo, but it was probably a regular part of important funerals there, as among the Menabe. In the latter group it was customary, in the course of the funeral festivities, to drive up one or two bulls. These were baited by the young men, who would incite them to charge and then avoid their rushes, swing by their tails, leap on their backs, etc. A favorite trick was to await the charge, catch the bull's

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782 [437] Chickens are much used for small sacrifices, such as those made in fulfilment of vows. Usually only the head and feet are actually offered, the rest being eaten by the sacrificer. They are also largely used in payment of fees to midwives, circumcisers and medicine-men. [541] Cock fighting, which is an important sport in the plateau, seems to be rare or lacking among the Tanala.

235 *Dokotra*, the large native ducks, are valued much more than chickens and can be bought only at exorbitant prices. They are relatively rare and I never saw more than four or five in a village. Their eggs are considered a great delicacy. They usually sleep and nest in the dwelling.

PETS

231 The Tanala are moderately fond of pets. The *zafimbato*, an animal much like an ordinary tabby cat in size, color and general appearance, is sometimes caught young and tamed. It is allowed to run free and helps to keep down rats and mice. The natives say it does not breed in captivity. Apparently it will cross with the ordinary domestic cat, a recent introduction, but I could not learn whether the offspring are fertile.

In nearly all the villages I saw pet lemurs. Three or four species were represented, a medium-sized gray animal and the large black and white lemur being the commonest. They were always kept tethered by a band around the waist. They seemed to be imperfectly tamed, although this may have been partly due to my being a white man. However, I never saw a native attempt to fondle one and I was often warned that they would bite.

In the southern part of the Menabe territory I saw a few birds kept in cages of open wicker work. These were usually hung up outside, under the eaves of the houses, but I saw one fastened to the top of a long pole. The birds were small and looked like larks or thrushes. Although parrots are common in this region, they do not seem to be kept as pets.

HUNTING

224 [136] The heavy forests of the Tanala country contain many sorts of small game but the only large species are the wild pig and *fossa*, a cat-like carnivor related to the genets. These will attack a human being when cornered, but are not dangerous ordinarily. There are a few Tanala families who live in the forest and subsist entirely on game and wild plants, but they are not numerous. There are no hunting tribes and no individually owned hunting territories. The

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extremely fond of grease and sweet things of all sorts, but seem to have little taste discrimination. All their cookery is simple and the main thing they require of a meal is quantity. 261

Although the native food is simple and not very varied, their ration seems to be well balanced. There are no diseases of malnutrition and I did not see a single rachitic child among natives who adhered to their primitive diet. 146

ALCOHOL AND NARCOTICS

Beer, called *betsabetsa*, has been used by the Tanala since prehistoric times. It is usually made from a mixture of honey and water, but the natives also employ sugar cane juice, bananas, sweet potatoes and anything else with a high sugar content. The mixture is allowed to stand in open jars for a few days, until it ferments, and then drunk before it turns sour. 273

Rice beer was made in ancient times, but it is now obsolete and I could not learn the process of manufacture. There are some indications that it was formerly used in ceremonies and sacrifices very much as rum is used at the present time. It is said to have been somewhat stronger than the modern beer.

Most of the native beer is so mild that it is impossible to become intoxicated upon it. It is of little importance in the native diet and there is nothing comparable to the regular beer drinking one finds among the African tribes. Women occasionally make it for their families, as a treat, and quantities of it are prepared for feasts, but a household may go for weeks without having any.

The manufacture of rum (*toaka*) was probably learned from Europeans, but it has been in use for at least a hundred and fifty years. It is distilled from beer of any sort although honey beer and sugar cane juice are preferred because of their greater alcoholic content. Pieces of astringent bark are usually steeped in the beer before it is distilled, to give the rum more flavor. The still consists of a large jar with a tight-fitting cover. In one side of the cover there is a small hole in which a long section of bamboo, or an old gun barrel, is inserted. The joints are sealed with clay. [177]

Rum is regularly offered to the gods and ancestors and is also a prescribed part of the fees paid to medicine-men, the gifts given to witnesses of adoption, blood brotherhood, etc. Good rum is as colorless as water. At the present time, clear glass bottles are in great demand among the Tanala, who will pay two or three times as much for them as for colored glass. These are used as containers for cere- [782] [437]

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322 412 Large, heavy gouges are used for hollowing out large boxes and canoes. The blade is provided with a socket by which it is fitted on the end of a heavy, straight wooden handle, like a spade handle. This gouge is swung with both hands, like the native spade. The head of the gouge is usually carried in a rawhide sheath (Fig. 11, c). Small gouges with curved blades are used for hollowing out spoons and other small utensils (Fig. 10, g). They are sometimes provided with a long handle which is gripped in the arm pit so that the blade is held rigid while the utensil is pressed and turned against it.

All wood working tools are sharpened with whetstones, which are carried on the belt in a hide sheath (Fig. 10, h).

313 The greater part of the Tanala territory is heavily forested, but because of their wasteful agricultural methods large timber is becoming scarce. It is often necessary to go several hours' march from a village to find trees suitable for making large utensils, canoes, and house timbers. In such cases the workmen build rude shelters at the place and live there until the work is finished.

It is considered wise to begin the felling of large trees on an auspicious day. It is not obligatory, but if this is neglected there may be accidents. If the trees selected are in a *zintana* ("place inhabited by spirits") the workmen make a small sacrifice before the felling begins and warn the spirits to go away so that they will not be injured. The trees are felled with axes, never with fire, and are cut off 2 to 3 feet above the ground. The Tanala apparently make no use of wedges or other appliances for splitting the wood. Timbers, utensils, etc., are hewn out bodily and brought to nearly their final form on the spot, to save labor in transport. They are then carried to the village to be finished at leisure. The Tanala never work with seasoned wood if green wood is obtainable.

322 After objects have been roughed out with the axe and heavy gouge they are dressed with planes and knives. If a very smooth surface is desired, the object is gone over with a heavy iron rasp of European manufacture, and the surface then rubbed down with a slightly rough stone or with damp sand on a piece of hide. Final smoothing is done with leaves. Wooden utensils are never polished intentionally, although they may become glossy through use.

322 531 The Zafimaniry do a good deal of wood carving. Their carving tools are knives and small chisels and gouges (Fig. 10, j), used without mallets. There is no carving in the round. The designs are incised after the surface has been rubbed smooth. Oval wooden boxes, beds and the timbers and doors of houses are the objects most

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643 527 787 or would not reign long. The *ombiasy* might change his destiny by bathing him with water containing magical materials, but he was sometimes dismissed then and there and another king chosen.

643 527 782 "The king entered the house by the big door on the east, taking care to place his left foot on the door sill first. He seated himself on the eastern side of the house on a clean mat, his counselors on the right and his wife on the left. An ox was tied to the *fatora* with its head east. [The *fatora* was a pointed post about six feet high, usually made of *teza* wood. It was set up east of the royal house to commemorate the ancestors.] The *Anakandriana* left the house. They threw water on the roof of the house and on the ox three times, while the chief *Anakandriambe* said: 'Oh *Zanahary* of the east, the south, the north and the west, come assist at this ceremony. We have chosen one to direct us, to counsel us and to protect us. We offer you an ox *lava trafo* [lit. with a long hump, i.e., fat]. We ask your protection that our new king may live and reign long, that we may be protected from all dangers, that the army of the Imerina may not come to our region, that the wild pigs and locusts may not injure our plantations, that we may be exempt from all sickness, that our women may have many children and that our wealth may be increased.' After making this invocation the *Anakandriambe* entered the house and the young men of *hova* caste killed the ox and cut up the meat. Rice and pieces of the meat were cooked and placed on a leaf of the Traveler's Palm or a clean china plate. This was then put on a handsome mat before the east door of the house. Everyone then uncovered his head and stood silent. The *Anakandriambe* advanced and addressed the *razana* [ancestral spirits]. He invited all the ancestors of the king to take part in the repast. He explained why they had been called, then asked their protection, good fortune and prosperity. When the prayer was finished a great quantity of rice and meat was cooked and the king offered *toaka* [sugar cane rum] to the *Anakandriana*, the singers and dancers. There was a great feast. There was a great uproar in the royal house, ending in shouts of laughter. The next day the king and his family gave two or three cattle to the people. These were killed [not sacrificed] and the meat distributed to everyone. The people then returned home talking of the incidents of the ceremony."

643 There seems to have been no formal procedure for deposing an undesirable king and it was extremely rare in practice. Kings were selected with great care and were watched and admonished by the

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775 drombe, a real mountain in the Ankaratra range. The Imerina and Betsileo believe that the souls of their dead live there, and the Tanala have probably borrowed the idea from them. A very few said that, as the *ambiroa* were close to the *Zanahary*, their villages must be in the sky, where the *Zanahary* live. One *ombiasy*, who was unusually well versed in the old tribal lore, said that the spirit villages were actually in the villages of the living, the *ambiroa* being drawn back or held there by their afterbirths, which had been interred before the doors of the houses where they were born. All agreed that the *ambiroa* often took up their residence in abandoned villages. The commonest belief seems to be that the spirit villages are located near the village tomb or sacred place or in certain localities called *zintana*. The *zintana* may be the sites of ancient tombs which have been abandoned, old village sites, hilltops, places where one suddenly feels the air to be cold and clammy, or patches of forest in which the [824] growth shows abnormalities. If the vines are twisted and knotted upon themselves and the trees turn in loops, or have stems that divide and unite again above, the place is certainly a *zintana*.

[782] Before such places can be cultivated an ox must be sacrificed, but after they have been brought under cultivation an annual sacrifice of rum at planting time seems to be enough. If this is not made, there will be no harvest and the persons who have planted the *zintana* will die. Sometimes a special part of the *zintana* is set aside for the sacrifices and left uncleared.

Although the fate of practically all *ambiroa* is that already described, there are two exceptions. The Manandriana gens of the Menabe believe that the *ambiroa* of persons killed with spears, and of those not buried in the village tomb, change into beings called *ziny*. The latter group would include lost bodies, lepers, smallpox victims, and the more flagrant thieves and sorcerers. The *ziny* are substantial and have the form of birds about the size of turkeys. They have fire under their wings which shows when they raise them. They are most frequently seen just before the rice is ripe, when people have begun to parch and eat it. They come into the villages at night and eat the chaff where the parched rice has been pounded. It is not dangerous to see them, but they sometimes attack people and that is fatal. The east coast tribes and the Betsileo also believe in the existence of these beings, but do not consider them of human origin. They appear to be derived from the Arab *djinns* and it seems probable that the Tanala, who think very little of non-human spirits, have added the idea of their human origin.

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ancestors as a group. Each stone commemorates a single individual who is invoked and sacrificed to there by his descendants. The largest combined *vato lahy* and *vato vavy* in the village sacred place are, however, employed for sacrifices to the ancestors as a whole.

ANCESTOR WORSHIP

PRAYER AND SACRIFICE

Prayer and sacrifice are inseparable in the native mind as all dealings with the ancestral spirits are conducted strictly on a basis of exchange. It is universally felt that prayer without sacrifice, or a promise to sacrifice, is useless. Moreover, the size of the sacrifice is, in general, proportional to that of the favor asked. An important request requires a large offering while a small one is enough for a small matter.

Tanala sacrifices fall into two classes: those addressed to the gods and ancestral spirits as a whole and those addressed to the spirits of individuals. The former are performed by priests or family heads and are public, the whole village, lineage, or family participating. They constitute a reaffirmation of the close bond existing between the ancestors as a whole and their descendants as a whole. The latter are performed by individuals and indicate that a relation has been established between one of the dead and one of the living. Sacrifices of this sort are usually small and are not felt to be of public interest, although anyone who wishes to may attend.

SACRIFICES TO THE ANCESTORS AS A WHOLE

Sacrifices to the ancestors as a whole fall into two classes: sacrifices performed in behalf of the whole community and sacrifices performed in behalf of individuals. The former are resorted to only in time of general calamity or to insure success in some communal undertaking, such as a war party. They are relatively infrequent. The latter are performed whenever an individual feels the need of supernatural assistance. Illness is the main cause and the one mentioned first by all informants, but such sacrifices also are made for success in business enterprises, safe return from journeys, or safe return from a war expedition.

PRIESTS.—All important sacrifices to the ancestors as a whole are performed by professional priests. Less important ones are made by heads of families. The priesthood seems to have been a direct outgrowth of the sacrificial functions of heads of families.

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or for his immediate family. The Imerina may have been an exception to this rule, but accounts of the early conditions there are vague and conflicting. Elsewhere, priests cannot delegate their functions to *ombiasy* even temporarily. Among the western tribes, where the distinction between the two offices is most rigid, *ombiasy* may not even direct sacrifices.

SACRIFICES ON BEHALF OF THE GENS.—Among the Menabe, sacrifices on behalf of the entire gens were made only in time of national calamity, such as pestilence, very serious crop failure, or an attack which threatened to drive the gens from its territory or subjugate it. They were performed on the tops of sacred mountains, the idea being that the worshippers were thus lifted closer to heaven and their prayers made more easily audible to the gods and ancestors. Each gens had one or more of these mountains within its territory. The Zafiakotry had three, which were the sites of three of their ancient villages, later abandoned. I could not learn whether the sacred mountains of other gentes had ever been inhabited. At present it is not taboo to visit the mountains or even to cultivate their lower slopes, but the summits are shunned as the abode of spirits. These high places are not marked by memorial stones or other permanent altars. A temporary wooden altar (see Sacrifices on Behalf of Individuals) was erected for the ceremony.

When there was more than one sacred mountain, the leading *ombiasy* of the gens, or some foreign *ombiasy* of great power, indicated which one should be used. He also selected the priest who was to officiate from among all those in the gens and indicated the ritual to be used, especially whether the sacrifice was to be boiled or grilled. The ritual was the same as for individual sacrifices. Apparently no sacrifices on behalf of a gens have been performed in recent times.

Sacrifices on behalf of a village or group of villages were performed before setting out on a war party. These have been described in the section on Warfare. They may have been performed on a few other occasions as well, but informants were uncertain. Since the establishment of French control they also have become obsolete.

SACRIFICES ON BEHALF OF INDIVIDUALS.—Sacrifices of this type are the commonest of all Tanala ceremonies. Although they are always made on behalf of some individual, the larger and more important ones are participated in by the entire village and are felt to be a reassertion of the close relation existing between the living and the souls of their ancestors. They may be performed during

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782 illness or before beginning the activity in which supernatural aid is hoped for, but are usually nade after help has been received, in fulfilment of a vow.

Vows are called *tsikafara*. To make a vow is *manovava* and to fulfil one *manalavava*. A vow may be made by any one at any time or place in case of sudden danger or other emergency, but deliberate [755] vows, especially those for the cure of illness, seem usually to be made by the village priest at the head of the sick person's bed. An ox is given to the priest by the person or his family after his recovery. Most vows are made publicly, the people of the village being called on to witness them. In the vow, the nature of the sacrifice, as a black ox, is specified and often the place where it will be performed, but there seems to be no fixed formula. All vows are rigidly fulfilled, for failure in this would result in the death of the individual and possibly the wiping out of his entire family by the enraged spirits.

Although all Tanala sacrifices conform to a general pattern there seems to be an almost infinite variation in details. Each gens has its own invocation and even different lineages within a gens may have peculiarities of procedure. From accounts of participants it seems that even two sacrifices performed by the same priest for the same purpose are rarely identical at all points. These individual variations are not due to carelessness, or to a poor development of ritual, but reflect a feeling that the circumstances surrounding two sacrifices are never the same. In approaching the gods and ancestors [777] the workings of fate must also be considered. Each day has its special significance, with favorable and unfavorable aspects (see *Vintana*, pp. 212–214) and each individual has a particular destiny. These must be taken into account to obtain results, and it is for this reason that *ombiasy* are consulted as to the best place, day and exact procedure for each sacrifice. The methods used by the *ombiasy* in determining these details are known only to themselves and the priests follow their directions blindly.

782 778 In most of the Menabe gentes the sacrificial procedure is as follows: The place of sacrifice may be indicated in a vow; if not, it is chosen by an *ombiasy*. Most sacrifices are performed at the *ampiseofana*, the village sacred place, where the memorial stones to the ancestors have been erected (see Erection of Memorial Stones). These stones are set up in pairs, a flat slab resting on a tripod of small stones, called the *vato vavy* ("female stone") and a tall upright stone called the *vato lahy* ("male stone"). The *vato lahy* is erected

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immediately to the east of the *vato vavy*, touching its edge. Each stone commemorates a different individual, but in sacrifices to the ancestors as a whole the largest pair will be used.

If the regular sacred place is not used and there are no memorial stones at the place chosen, a temporary altar is built. This must be made entirely of *rotra* wood. Four posts about 3 inches in diameter and 3 feet high are planted in the form of a square with its corners northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest. In the middle of the eastern side of the square a fifth post is planted. This is somewhat thicker than the other four and about 18 inches longer and is forked at the top. The tops of the posts on the northern and southern sides are connected by crosspieces, lashed on with vines. Small, closely spaced sticks are laid across to form a table. The finished altar is 2 to 3 feet square. It is erected without special rites before the ceremony begins.

The altar, whether of wood or stone, is covered with the finest new mat obtainable. Over this is laid a layer of fresh leaves from the Traveler's Palm.

Cattle are the principal offering in all important sacrifices. The most desirable sacrifice is a fat ox. The animal is led to the place of sacrifice, thrown and tied, and laid with its head west, south or east, according to the direction of the *ombiasy*, but never north. Its throat is cut by some member of the family of the person in whose behalf the sacrifice is performed. No invocation is repeated at the killing and there seems to be no idea that the soul of the ox is sent to the ancestors. It is simply the source of the meat later offered to them. The ox may even be killed elsewhere and its meat brought to the place of sacrifice. Rum and rice are also brought to the place of sacrifice, but are of less importance than the ox.

After the ox has been killed, pieces are cut from different parts of it to make the sacrifice. The parts chosen vary somewhat in different groups and ceremonies. Among the Manandriana ten parts are taken, as follows: hump, *trafony*, breast, *lengontratrany*, shoulder just below the hump, *manangina*, rump, *fotopeny*, liver, *atiny*, lungs, *tsikavony*, white intestines, *tsinainipotsiny*, kidneys, *voany*, large stomach, *tabohany*, and small stomach, *vorovorony*. Apparently most of the groups take only five: the hump, rump, liver, white intestines, and one other which is variable. The pieces to be offered are taken from the right side of the animal or organ. The head is cut off and placed on the altar at the base of the upright stone, or in the fork of the highest post. It is laid with the nose

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782 778 west and its horns are decorated with silver bracelets and chains. The rest of the animal is then cut up and part of the meat is usually put to boil, while the rest is laid aside to be distributed at the close of the ceremony. Rice is cooked at the same time, in preparation for the feast which usually concludes the proceedings.

782 793 All the Menabe have two methods of offering the sacrifice, called *tsemoka* and *soroma*. Either method may be used, on the advice of the *ombiasy*, but some families normally employ one, some the other. In the Zafindiamanana gens the *tsemoka* ceremony is as follows:

While the sacrificial parts are being cut, a fire is kindled to the west of the altar, without ceremony. The sacrificial parts are laid on the coals or grilled on a long iron fork with three or five tines. As soon as they have been placed on the fire, the person on whose behalf the sacrifice is made and his family take up a position to the west of the fire, facing the altar. They stand and remove their hats. The priest stands in front of them, also facing the altar, with the *hazomanga* in his left hand and the sacred knife in his right. He holds the *hazomanga* pointing eastward and upward and scrapes it three times, counting "One, two, three" in a loud voice. After the third stroke he calls out: "*Zanahary*, give us life." He then begins again and scrapes and counts up to six, calling after the sixth stroke: "*Zanahary*, give us life and health." *Telo* and *enena*, the native words for three and six are, by a pun, supposed to signify life and health respectively.

After scraping the *hazomanga* the priest looks upward and repeats the invocation in a high, shrill voice. That used when sacrificing for a sick person is as follows: "Listen, listen, *Zanahary* male, *Zanahary* female, Rangidana, Rantimoa, the sun, Beeronerona, Rangamina, Andrangofalafa, Madiovazankoho, Tsimangano nahananga, the moon, the sun, and stars. [Note: The sun is invoked twice, once by its ceremonial name, once by the ordinary name.] See, you others who are in the sky! Man is blood which you have made solid and to which you have given life and intelligence. You have advised: 'If there is anything which grieves you or gives you joy, come and let us know.' Well, so-and-so is sick and the *ombiasy* has found by divination that you, *Zanahary*, demand an ox. Observe there the sacrificial parts [names of these repeated]. Eat well in our presence, then cure this sick person to the bottom."

After the invocation everyone remains perfectly quiet for about five minutes, then the priest says: "You, *Zanahary*, do not take long to eat. Mount again by the golden rope and place yourselves

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on the golden seats, from which you watch us to give us life." There is then a pause of two or three minutes to allow the gods to depart. 782 793

When the gods have gone, the priest calls out: "We call you equally, oh ancestors [calling by their life names all the ancestors he knows and also naming five or six tombs where the bodies of ancestors are or have been buried], for it is you who have brought us into the world, exalted ones. You have gone where you are changed into *Zanahary*. So-and-so is sick and the *ombiasy* has found by divination that you demand an ox. Observe there the sacrificial parts [names of these repeated]. Eat well in our presence and cure this sick person thoroughly. Free him of all his pains. If some one of you, oh ancestors, is sick and therefore absent, take him part of the food." The ancestors are allowed about twenty minutes to eat and then the priest dismisses them. 782 793 769

When the priest finishes speaking, the small boys, six to eight years old, scramble for the grilled meat and each one can eat the piece he gets. This meat is simply the scraps left by the gods and ancestors. After this the whole company feasts on the boiled meat and rice or, if no feast has been prepared, the meat of the ox is divided and all disperse. The lungs are given to the priest. 782 793

In the *sorona* ceremony of this gens the ox is killed either at the sacred place or in the village. The sacred parts are put to cook in a new earthen pot and rice is boiled in another. While it is cooking the rest of the animal is divided and those who have both parents living can cook and begin to eat their share at once. Orphans, on the other hand, can not take their share of the meat until the sacrifice has been made. When the food is cooked, a wooden bowl is partly filled with rice, with a heap of boiled meat on top. This is taken to the place of sacrifice and laid on the altar. The person in whose behalf the sacrifice is made seats himself to the west of the altar, facing it, and the priest stands behind him, also facing it. The priest scrapes the *hazomanga*, as already described, and repeats the following invocation: "Listen, listen, we call you *Zanahary*, *Zanahary* male and female, Rangidana, Beeronerona, Rantimoa, the sun, Andrangofalafa, Madiovazankoho, the moon, the stars, water, earth, and the twelve mountains." He then explains the reason for the sacrifice, ending with: "Here are pieces of all the parts of the ox. Eat them and bless us." After a few minutes' silence he says: "The gods do not take long to eat. You have now eaten. Return to your place in the sky by the golden chain and sleep in the sky. From there send us blessings and give us life."

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782 769 793 When the gods have gone, the priest calls the ancestors, first calling by their life names all the ancestors of the person giving the sacrifice, then all the known ancestors of the village and gens, and lastly giving a general invitation to all souls between the sea and *Ampatrana* (the mountains which form the western boundary of the Tanala territory). He explains the reason for the sacrifice and asks them to eat, using the same formula as for the gods. About twenty minutes of silence follow, then he tells them to return to their place as the family is about to eat. After this everyone feasts, eating even the food from the altar.

782 769 Apparently the differences between the two invocations are not directly connected with the form of the ceremony. The form is varied to suit the sacrifice, on the advice of the *ombiasy*.

In most of the other Menabe gentes the procedure for the *tsemoka* is practically the same as that given. The *sorona*, on the other hand, is rather more elaborate. The ox is killed at the place of sacrifice and its meat boiled in a new pot on a special fire to the west of the altar. The invocations do not begin until the offering has been arranged on the altar. Rice is boiled at the same time as the meat, but on a different fire. When both are done, the rice is ladled out with a very large wooden spoon (Fig. 23, a). Seven piles of rice are made on the altar at equal intervals, each pile containing three spoonfuls. Three piles are arranged across the back of the altar, three across its center, and one in front. A hollow is made in the top of each pile with the sacrificial ladle, and this is filled with meat and broth. The three piles at the rear of the altar are for the ancestors of highest rank, the three center piles for ordinary ancestors, and the single pile for the souls of *ndevo* ancestors. If the altar is small only four piles are made, three in the rear for important ancestors and one in front for all other ghosts.

782 769 793 In the Manandriana gens the procedure for the *sorona* is as follows: The sacrificer and his family stand or sit to the west of the altar with the priest standing in front. The priest scrapes the *hazomanga* as described. He then makes the following invocation: "Listen, listen, *Zanahary* male, Andiodotra, Vorombetsivazana, Andranofalafa, and Madiovazankoho. You are called because so-and-so is sick [or because he has made a vow, repeating vow and circumstances]. Because of this we give you a sacrifice." After a few minutes of silence the priest says: "The *Zanahary* do not ask much time to eat. Return to your place, mounting by the chain of gold and the rope of silver. Return to the place in the sky where

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you live, for we are going to call the ancestors also." One priest explained the reference to the gold chain and silver rope by saying that, as the sky was high, the gods must have some means of going up and down and, since they were gods, everything belonging to them would be of precious metal. 769 782 793

After the gods have been sent back the priest calls the ancestors of the person sacrificing by name, but not the ancestors in collateral lines. He explains the reason for the sacrifice and invites them to eat. The whole company then keeps silence for about half an hour. At the end of this the priest says: "We called you because [again reciting reason]. Now that you have eaten, return to your place, for we are going to eat in our turn." The relatives then eat all the rice and meat which has been cooked, including most of the sacrifice. If the *ombiasy* has advised the offering of rum, a little of it is placed in a bamboo which is planted in the ground to the east of the altar. The rest is drunk. At the close of the ceremony it is customary to leave a little meat and rice on the altar, but the priest takes the mat which has lain under the sacrifice. This, with the heart of the ox and 1.25 francs in money, constitutes his pay for performing the ceremony. The *ombiasy* who has directed it receives the head and right fore foot as his pay.

The Zafiakotry, one of the subdivisions of the Manandriana, had a slightly different method of arranging the *sorona* offering. This group originally used only upright memorial stones about as tall as a man. When the offering was ready, equal portions were put in two wooden bowls. One of these was placed on top of the stone, the other on the ground. The lower one was set on a new mat to the east of the stone. The bowl on the stone was for the gods, that on the ground for the ancestors. The *tsemoka* rite was never performed at the sacred stones. If performed in the village, both the *sorona* and *tsemoka* were usually held indoors, either in the house of the person in whose behalf the offering was made, or in the *trano be* ("public house of the village"), if the sacrificer belonged to the same lineage as the village chief. At present they use stone tables, but continue to make the bulk of their sacrifices indoors.

The invocation and general procedure was the same as for the rest of the Manandriana. My informant for this group, who was himself a priest, told me that he had been interested in the attributes of the gods named in the invocation and had tried to learn something about them from the other priests and from old people. No one

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769 could tell him anything and he concluded that they must be members
● 782 of *Zanahary lahy's* (*Zanahary* the male's) family.

793 In the Zafindriantrova gens stone tables are employed for sacrifices at the sacred place, but all but the most important offerings are made in the dwelling of the village priest, or in that of the person responsible for the offering. The ox is killed to the east of the house and the meat and rice cooked on the regular fireplace. In the *sorona* rite a mat is laid on the floor in the sacred northeast corner of the house, with a covering of Traveler's Palm leaves. Six piles of rice and meat are made on this in two rows, as on the altar. Southwest of this leaves are laid, but no mat, and a single pile is made for the *ndevo* and strange ghosts.

The sacrificer scrapes the *hazomanga* only three times, with the usual counting and invocation. He then addresses the spirits as follows: "Sambatsinana. Antsinanana firy razana. Mangaiky anao, *Zanahary; Zanahary lahy, Zanahary vavy*, Rangidina, Andriananantomoa, Madiovazankoho, Beerongeronga, Vorombetsivazana, Andranofalafa, Avia fahisaofana. Mandroronga amny tady volomena mipetraka aminy farafara vola." "Hail [or salute] to the East. In the East there are many ancestors. You are being called *Zanahary* male, *Zanahary* female, etc. Come for we wish to offer you a sacrifice. Descend by the golden cord and sit upon the bed of silver." The reason of the sacrifice is then explained and the gods invited to eat. After a short pause the ancestors are called and allowed about twenty minutes to eat, after which the gods and ancestors are sent back together. The priest who was my informant for this gens had also made inquiries as to the nature of the gods, but could learn nothing.

782 In all the gentes the less important sacrifices are made by the
596 head of the family in the sacred northeast corner of the house. Most
769 of the gentes use a small hanging altar which is almost identical with the frames used for smoking fish (Fig. 3, c). This is covered with a mat and leaves, but usually only one pile of food is made. The head of the house invokes *Zanahary* and the ancestors simultaneously, repeating no individual names, and the whole procedure is rather informal. The frequency of small family sacrifices varies with the customs of the group and the piety of the individual. Many families make an offering at every meal, placing a few grains of rice on the altar or simply throwing a little of the food toward the east.

778 No rituals or eyewitness accounts of sacrifices among the Tanala
782 Ikongo were obtained. Apparently there are no village sacred places.

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Their memorial stones are erected anywhere and are not used for sacrifices to the ancestors as a whole. Many of their sacrifices are made at pointed wooden posts, about 5 feet high and 3 inches in diameter. Numbers of these posts are to be seen in their villages. In some cases each family has one or more, erected to the east of the dwelling. Apparently both the *tsemoka* and *sorona* rites are employed, but I was unable to learn whether temporary altars were built, how the offerings were arranged, etc. The sacrifices are performed by hereditary priests under the direction of *ombiasy*, as among the Menabe. 778 782

SACRIFICES TO INDIVIDUAL SPIRITS

Sacrifices to individual spirits seem to be fairly common among the Menabe, although they are of less importance than those made to the ancestors as a whole. Apparently the Ikongo have similar ideas and practices, but no exact information could be obtained. The Menabe honor both ancestral and non-ancestral spirits. 782 769

Sacrifices to individual ancestors may be made because the ghost has demanded them, to placate a malicious or offended ghost, or in fulfilment of a vow. In general, the appearance of an ancestor in a dream or vision is interpreted as a demand for a sacrifice. If the apparition has not made its wishes known, the person who has seen it will consult an *ombiasy* as to the sort of sacrifice required, the proper place, etc. *Ombiasy* are believed to be in close touch with the ancestral spirits, who visit them from time to time and, through them, demand sacrifices from specified descendants. After such a visit, the *ombiasy* notifies the victim, who is bound to comply with the demand, under penalty of sickness or other misfortune. Persons bilked in this way often grumble and may even ask the ghost for a postponement, but they do not seem to doubt the genuineness of the communication. The belief offers a good opportunity for blackmail and one informant remarked cynically that it seemed to be only the ancestors of the rich who demanded sacrifices through *ombiasy*. The *ombiasy* may also decide, by divination, that an illness, or persistent ill fortune, is due to the malevolent activity of a special ghost and advise that a sacrifice be made to placate it. 782 769 787 [191]

Vows to individual ancestors are commonest in time of sudden danger. They arise from a feeling that a close relative, as a father or grandfather, will be more attentive and helpful than the ancestors as a whole. The greatest vow is that to erect a memorial stone, because of the expense involved. Informants knew only one instance of such a promise. Commonly an ox is vowed. 782 769

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782 769 If the ancestor to whom the sacrifice is made has a memorial stone the sacrifice will normally be made there. The fat of the ox may be rendered down and smeared on the stone, but the Menabe seem to regard this as an innovation. If there is no stone, the *ombiasy* is consulted for the most propitious place. The southern gentes of the Menabe have, in addition to memorial stones, wooden posts which are set up in their villages. These are called *vato lahy hazo* (lit. "wooden memorial stones") or *feza*. They are erected for sacrifices to individual ancestors, although two or three ancestors may be commemorated by a single post. The posts are the property of individual families and are usually planted east of the dwelling.

[793] If an ox is sacrificed, the regular priest is employed and the ritual, except for the invocation, is identical with that used for sacrifices to the ancestors as a whole. In the invocation the priest calls first on *Zanahary*, then on the ancestor who is being honored, and lastly on the other ancestors. If the offering is less than an ox, the sacrifice is performed by the person himself and only *Zanahary* and the special ancestor are invoked.

Sacrifices to non-ancestral spirits are of two sorts, those made in acknowledgment of their claim to certain localities and those made to obtain their help. If a man desires to cultivate a patch of land on which there is a memorial stone, he must first sacrifice an ox to the individual whom it commemorates.

Sacrifices to obtain help are based on the belief that certain souls are possessed of more than ordinary power. An old man or woman will frequently announce that he or she will answer prayers after death. The promise is made repeatedly and publicly and there appears to be a set formula, ending with the proviso, "I will do this if what the ancestors [or the *ombiasy*] have said is true." In the promise the person specifies what shall be offered to him. One old woman requested snuff of a special kind and an old man *soampoa* and *anemany*, vegetables of which he was especially fond. In nearly all cases the promise is to respond to prayers for a single purpose, as success in business, safe return from journeys, offspring, etc.

After the death of the person a memorial stone is erected to him and anyone, related or not, may repair to it to vow and pray to him. If the first few requests are not granted, the people conclude that the ghost lacks power and pay no more attention to it. If, on the other hand, the prayers are granted, a regular cult may develop, and the worship may continue for several generations.

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It is thought that the souls of such persons reside in their memorial stones. The suppliant approaches the stone and slaps it several times with his open hand, to awaken the spirit. If he does this properly, his request is sure to be granted. He then says: "Listen, listen, so-and-so. I am going on a journey [giving details of his route, etc.]. If I come back safe and the trip is a success, I will bring here and sacrifice to you so much honey [or snuff, rum, etc.]." When the prayer has been granted, the vower makes the offering himself, with no ceremony except a second awakening of the spirit and a brief announcement. 782 769

OMBIASY

The term *ombiasy* signifies a medicine-man or magician. The Menabe recognise two main classes, *ombiasy manangatra* and *ombiasy mpikidy*. The latter are divided into *ombiasy ndolo* and *ombiasy nkazo*. All the types of *ombiasy* include both men and women. Men are more numerous, but some of the most famous are women. 756 791

The *ombiasy manangatra* are spiritualist mediums. They are usually marked by some slight mental or nervous abnormality. No special training is required and they begin practicing as soon as they become conscious of their powers. Their main activity is the discovery of the cause of illness and the means for curing it. Informants thought that they might be appealed to in other matters, but could give no instances. 756

Seances are held in the *ombiasy's* house, always at night. The *ombiasy* spreads a mat in the northeast corner of the house, placing on it a bottle of rum and certain charms. He sits beside it or lies on it. Sometimes both *ombiasy* and mat are covered with a tent-like mosquito net of raffia cloth. This tent is about 5 feet high and comes down to the floor, giving complete concealment. The sick person and his relatives seat themselves on the floor, apparently without any fixed order, and the fire and all lights are extinguished. The people begin clapping and singing softly. After a time a knocking is heard on the walls, or voices are heard repeating: "We have come. We have come." There are sometimes as many as ten or twelve spirits, distinguishable by their different voices. The voices are nasal and seem to come from the east or west of the *ombiasy*, sometimes high, sometimes low, but never far from him. The head of the family, or the sick person, then tells the spirits why they have been called. After this the *ombiasy* explains the situation fully and 755 787

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FIG. 28. Ceremonial Objects. a, Sacrificial Ladle; b, Basket for Dividing Set; c, Charm Bracelet; d, Charm Necklace; e, Charm for General Good Fortune; f, Charm in Form of Coffin; g, Charm for Good Health; h, Cupping Horn; i, Hat of Salamanga; k, Post for Sacrifice of First Rice (Aimoré); l, Post for Circumcision Sacrifice.

arrangement by which an enemy king took no part in the combat and was saved by any commoner who captured him was due to the social organization of the Ilongo. Among them one gens had attained royal rank and nearly all the kings belonged to it. The commoner was thus saving the life of one of his own king's relatives.

Among the Menabe the whole arrangement was looser and more democratic. There were no kings in the old days and war was decided upon by the influential men of the gens. Later, when royal institutions had been introduced, the king and council decided on war and the king then had a trumpet blown to summon the whole village to the public square. There he announced that they would make war on such and such a village on such and such a date. The date was always a propitious one chosen by an *ombiasy* who had been selected for his skill in such matters and who would look after the magical details of the expedition. Messengers were sent to the other villages of the gens and to allied gentes. If it was a great undertaking all the able-bodied men of the tribe participated, if a small expedition each village furnished a quota fixed by the king. The *fasalolahy* seem to have had less authority here than in the south. To distinguish them from the other soldiers they wore a *felana* ("shell disk") and crocodile-tooth charm on the left side of the forehead and a broad bandoleer hung with charms (called *tamango*) passing over the right shoulder. There were no other war costumes, although all warriors wore charms. Painting for war was unknown.

On the day fixed the warriors assembled in a camp outside the village. This was usually near the village sacred place, where the ancestral stones were erected. There seem to have been no taboos in connection with the camp. Women and children could visit it and young men about to go on the expedition often celebrated their marriages there. Cattle were killed, the number depending on the size of the war party, and the best ox was chosen for sacrifice. The sacrifice was made at the ancestral stones by the regular ritual (see Prayer and Sacrifice). The officiating *mpisoroana*, the hereditary sacrificial priest, was chosen by the *ombiasy* from among the *mpisoroana* present, and he also advised whether the parts offered were to be grilled or boiled. The usual invocation was made to the gods and ancestors, but they were asked to bless the expedition and the chief against whom it was directed was named. The party sometimes remained in camp as much as three days.

The expedition left the camp at the exact moment set by the *ombiasy* and both he and the king accompanied it. The *ombiasy's*

he can afford it, and tell him that she is bearing his child. The father will then consent to the marriage, to avoid scandal. Such conduct is considered reprehensible and the relatives on both sides will scold the couple. However, the trouble soon blows over and has no permanent effect on the social status of the pair. 584

Although marriages rarely begin in romantic attachments, affection between married people is common and seems to increase with age. Quarrels between husband and wife are rare. They are drawn together by their love for their children and by their common economic interests. Divorce, although very easy, seems to be much less frequent than among ourselves. 593 [586]

The degrees of relationship within which marriage is proscribed have been discussed under Social Organization. However, the force of the proscription varies. In addition to the absolutely forbidden degrees, there are certain relatives whose marriage is considered a semi-incest, likely to have bad results. This applies particularly to the descendants of two brothers. To remove the danger it is thought well to perform a ceremony to remove the ban. 582

Among the Ikongo this ban-lifting ceremony is called *fafy*. The man provides one ox if the relationship is remote or two if it is close. The animals are thrown and tied on the east side of the father's house, with their heads toward the east. The head of the lineage cuts their throats, invoking the gods and ancestors and explaining the reason for the sacrifice. The sacrificial parts are cooked and offered and the rest of the meat cut up and distributed raw to the members of both families involved. The man takes the heart and squeezes a few drops of blood from it on the forehead of the girl. She then takes it and does the same to him. After this the ban is lifted and they will have a prosperous life together. 582 782

Among the Menabe the ban-lifting ceremony is only compulsory when a man marries the daughter of his mother's sister's son, but it is thought advisable when he marries his father's brother's daughter or granddaughter. In ancient times an ox was killed and the couple sprinkled with the blood. This ceremony is now obsolete and the ritual has been forgotten. At present, the head of the lineage puts water in a wooden dish with a silver bracelet and scrapings of the *hasomanga* (see Prayer and Sacrifice). He asperges the couple with the water three or six times, usually six, counting as he does so. He then invokes the gods and ancestors and announces: "These two [giving the names] wish to marry. They are forced to this by love and by the difficulty of finding mates of the allowed degrees.

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582 782 Please pardon them and let them have children, both boys and girls. We ourselves have pardoned them, so that punishment for the infraction of the taboo may be averted." After this they may marry safely. If they marry without the ceremony, they will both become ill, or will be sterile, or any children born to them will die in infancy.

CEREMONIES OF BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE

584 Among the Tanala Ikongo the formalities of marriage are as follows: When a couple have decided to marry they notify their respective parents. Before giving consent the parents investigate: 1. The conduct of the future husband or wife. 2. Whether the person is free from other attachments. Previous wives are, of course, no bar to the union. 3. Whether the couple are within the prohibited degrees of relationship. If both families are content, the boy sends one or two men of his family, or close friends, to ask for the girl. The emissary does this in a set speech and when the offer has been accepted, presents her father with the *fiboaka* or bride price. This consists of rum, spades, etc., and is usually fairly large. The marriage is not legal unless the bride price has been paid.

From the moment the *fiboaka* has been given and received the girl is considered bound. No one else may ask for her in marriage. She continues to live with her parents for about a month, during which time she weaves the mats, baskets, etc., necessary for the new establishment. At the same time the prospective husband prepares the house and makes the wooden utensils. He visits her from time to time, working for her parents and especially bringing them firewood. This period of service is called *tato-bitsy*. The young people may begin to have sexual relations as soon as the bride price has been paid.

585 When everything is ready for the new home a medicine-man is called in to indicate an auspicious day for the final ceremony. On this day the man sends three men and three women of his family to get the girl. These are called *mpanaka*. When they arrive at the father-in-law's house there is an exchange of speeches. Finally the father-in-law counsels his daughter to behave well in her new home and invokes the gods and ancestral spirits, asking them to protect the couple and give them children. A simple meal is then served. After this the girl and the *mpanaka* start to the husband's house, the *mpanaka* carrying the baggage. This consists of mats and baskets, pounded rice, dried meat, etc.